2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

177 423 (464) planters or to engage in new occupations so as to earn enough cash to maintain themselves and pay the revenue assessments on their land (Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 64; Grigg, 1880, 325, 471, 480; Ranga, 1934, 11–14). Those made landless by the restrictions on forest swidden cultivation and also the labour surplus of the immigrant and rapidly expanding population were obliged to work in the plantations for wages, which were primarily used for buying grain in the markets. By 1870 Badaga men were getting contracts as construction gangs, a few women were picking tea or coffee-beans and young boys could be seen breaking stones by the roadside.[10]

241 311 (423) (492) (407) (423) Early in this century most Badaga families still owned and cultivated land within two kilometres of their homes. This land was usually hilly and always unirrigated. There was relatively little terracing on the hill-slopes (Grigg, 1880, 470), and most tilling was still done with ploughs and oxen.[11] The best fields lay in the valley flats, not so much because of the proximity of stream water as because of the rich deposit of topsoil. Badagas had long recognized the differences in soils and terrain, both when choosing where to plant crops and when dividing up the patrimony. Soil distinctions were important to them, but distance from the home was even more significant. Land was therefore categorized by Badagas primarily as home-farm (within a half kilometre), outfield, or jungle clearings.[2] The first type got much of the cattle manure and all human refuse; more distant land received little manure and was often left fallow (Grigg, 1880, 319–320, quoting from a Revenue Board Report probably of 1863); jungle clearings were never manured and could lie fallow for several years. Weeding, like manuring, was mostly confined to the more valuable crops growing near the home.

311 (423) (177) 127 A majority of the cultivable land on the plateau has always belonged to the Badagas; in the mid-nineteenth century this amounted to 12,750 hectares, of which some 6,900 ha. were cultivated each year; but thirty years later 'the occupied area of the plateau has trebled itself... mainly due to the extension of cultivation by the Badaga villagers'. During the twentieth century virtually all of the land under subsistence crops (barley, millets and wheat) as well as plateau land growing market vegetables and fruits was farmed by Badagas and Kotas. On the other hand a majority of the land devoted to tea, coffee and cinchona was in British-owned plantations. Few reliable figures

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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government's making loans available on relatively easy terms for terrace construction (Grigg, 1880, 470; Ranga, 1934, 12–13).

As a result of terracing in many places and minute subdivision elsewhere, fields are usually so small that it has become inefficient, if not impossible, to plough them (Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249). For over forty years therefore the plough and oxen have rarely been seen on the plateau (Ranga, 1934, 12–13; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249; Noble, 1968, 144–145; see below, p. 167, n. 11). Much of the work load formerly carried by oxen is now taken by cheap migrant labourers from the plains; men work for daily wages of three rupees (equivalent to 40 cts. U.S.), and women for two (1970).

While the profits from potato, tea and coffee are very much higher per hectare than those from the traditional grain crops, the risks are also much greater. Not only does a farmer need ready cash to buy seed or cuttings, fertilizer and labour, but reserve cash is needed to feed his family should disease ruin the crop one season. Here the co-operative societies set up under state government guidance have helped Badagas somewhat, but less than might be expected. Short-term loans are available against land securities for all members of a society,[20] and long-term loans are obtainable from the Land Mortgage Bank (established in 1937).

Before the appearance of these facilities the money-lender (a Tamilian Chettiar, a northern Marwari or a Moslem) was an ominous figure in the lives of many Badagas; for some he still is. Early in the present century the monthly interest on his loans ranged from 3% to 12.5% of the principal, but though these rates were quite extortionate loans were in general repaid (Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 64; Madras, 1928, 55; Ranga, 1934, 4). In the previous century not even these loan facilities were accessible to Badagas: they could only borrow from wealthy Badagas, preferably those related to the borrower by marriage but living in a village at some discreet distance from him. No interest was charged on such loans then.

The first Badaga co-operative society was formed at Kereha:da in 1911, the 'Kerhada Rice Rural Credit Society', named in reference to Mr. S. P. Rice, a former Collector who had initiated interest in the co-operative movement. At that time annual interest rates varied between 24% and 75% of the principal. By 1918 there were eighteen such societies, and by 1927 the plateau had fifty-four agricultural credit societies from which Badagas could get loans

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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attitudes sufficiently to become Christians now prompt people to alter other orientations not allied to religious values but rather to a secular government and its new ranking of employment and educational priorities. Such a change in orientation holds out the chance of upward mobility, but in that process conversion to Christianity has become an anachronistic mechanism.

NEW PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION

The idea of communication embraces the physical facilities of road and rail transport, postal and telegraph services, as well as the mass media of radio, film and newspaper, and the channels for communication between individuals within a local setting. We shall review briefly how these have changed in recent decades.

Transportation

Steady improvements in transport have helped the production and sale of cash crops. In the last century all goods had to be carried up or down the Nilgiri escarpment by coolies, on horseback or in bullock carts.[10] Faced with such restrictions Badagas were unable to export produce to other parts of India (Grigg, 1880, 480). Then in 1899 a railway was completed from Coimbatore to Coonoor (a remarkable engineering achievement), and by 1908 it reached to Ootacamund. Its construction involved Badaga contractors and labourers, giving some their first experience of earning regular wages. When the 1914–1918 War began there was thus a quick means of exporting vegetables to all parts of India and even beyond.

During the years between the two wars trucks became common in the district, and roads were improved to accommodate them. A few Badagas who became middlemen bought lorries to improve their business. At the same time a bus service began, and in the years since World War II the network of bus routes has become so complex that there is now scarcely any Badaga village more than five kilometres from a bus route leading to a town. Seventy routes are travelled within the district, some by several competing companies.[11]

The Impact of Towns

The availability of such a profusion of buses has helped the

231 Nearly every
592 family owns a few buffaloes, and the more affluent also have good European breeds
of cow. Until the Second World War it was normal for buffaloes and oxen to be
178 used in plowing; but in recent years the fragmentation of land holdings and the
492 terracing of slopes have made the plow superfluous, as such small plots can only
be worked by manual labor (Ranga 1934: 12-13; Viveknandam Pillai 1937: 249).

178 The shortage of farmland during the present century has caused some
463 Badagas to look to other occupations. Today there are several hundred college
graduates employed in law, medicine, education and government. Such people
usually work in the towns, and preferably in the Nilgiris; but wherever possible
they continue to live in their natal villages.

184 The Badagas embrace four quite distinguishable sub-cultures. These can
be identified as:

1) The (non-Lingayat) Saivites, who form about 90 percent of the entire community;

2) The Lingayats, a small but influential minority;

3) The Christian converts, who are considered Badagas in a court of law but regard themselves as separate from, and are treated as a distinct and inferior caste by, the other Badagas;

4) The Wynaad Gaudas, a peripheral minority of Badagas who have lived for two or three centuries in eight widely separated villages of the Wynaad Plateau, and are now culturally closer to the Wynaad Chettis than to the Hill Badagas. We shall not be concerned with them in this study.

(101)

615 Apart from these distinctions, the Hill Badagas (nos. 1 and 2 in the above list) divided into a number of jati-like social groups -- we are calling them

241 cription. Jungle clearings often lay fallow for several years. Weeding, like manuring, was also restricted for the most part to crops growing near the home.

(492) Prior to 1913 there was almost no terracing of the hill-slopes, and most of the tilling was done by plows drawn by pairs of oxen (Grigg 1880: 470). Coffee and tea were being grown extensively by the British at that time, but the chief Badaga crops were barley, samai and korali (the latter two being millets). No 178 311 figures are readily available for the total area of land under crop by Badagas in those days: it was reportedly little below the present amount. In the case of the administrative "village" of Sholur, nevertheless, some data are available and we can make a realistic comparison. This village is typical of Badaga settlements and has hardly changed its official boundaries since the land settlement of 1884:

Total village area, 1884:	22,520 acs.
Total village area, 1962:	22,942 acs.
(423) Registered patta lands, 1884:	2,257 acs., all held by Badagas
Estimate of patta lands, 1962:	4,000 acs., nearly all held by Badagas
Number of pattas, 1884:	49 single ones, 63 joint registrations (i.e. total of 112 pattas)
Number of pattas, 1962:	372 total
(161) Population, 1881:	1772 total
Population, 1951:	5278 total (more recent figures not available)
Estimate of crop acreage, 1880-81:	1850 acs.
Estimate of crop acreage, 1962:	1500 acs.

(Sources -- McIver & Stokes 1883; Benson 1884; Arputhanathan 1953: 43; Subrahmanyam 1962: 3-4.)

178 From this comparison evidence of several important changes emerges:

(161) a) in 70 years the population has tripled;

(423) b) in 80 years the number of registered land holdings (pattas) has more than tripled;

(423) c) in 80 years the acreage of patta land has doubled (through release of

243 placed in small heaps, and burned when dry. Plows used in soil preparation were of a general type presently used in southern India. Some (407) doubtlessly had a metal strip attached to the share, but Ouchterlony (175) (1848: 31) stated that the share was "almost invariably a piece of pointed wood, of a tough description, hardened in the fire, and not shod with iron, or any other metal." Plowing was performed by two • (492) methods. In the first, a lead team of yoked cattle drawing a plow was followed by five or six similar teams drawing plows. After plows scraped a single furrow, paralleled furrows were formed by forcing the (492) cattle to pull plows in lines paralleling the first. When the other method was used, a single team of yoked cattle pulled a plow over a field as many as five times. During each replowing, furrows were (462) crossed. After the men had finished the plowing, women and children (857) with small hoes worked over the soil, broke up clods, removed weeds, and piled them in small heaps. After the weeds were burned, the ashes were scattered over the ground. Cattle manure from cattle pens was mixed with community trash, loaded into baskets, and carried to fields. After being broadcast, the fertilizer was worked into the soil through another plowing or with hoes. Men broadcast seeds, or planted seeds, plants, and seed potatoes (later 1800s) in rows. Sown seeds were covered by a last plowing or light hoeing. Women and children usually weeded the fields two or more times. To speed this process up, rows (592) of weeders sometimes worked cooperatively. Harvesting was performed (412) by all family members, and sickles were the main harvesting implements. Bundles of straw with grain or baskets loaded with grain heads were carried as head loads to threshing floors. Temporary threshing floors

243 (220) (492) fields. A single plow, usually pulled by two buffaloes, may be drawn back and forth over a field. At irregular intervals of days or even weeks the field will be reploved until it has been ploved four to six times, with former plow lines being crossed at each replowing. If several buffalo teams are available, plowing may be speeded by teams (312) working simultaneously in a single file. Dikes to retain rainwater must also be rebuilt or repaired with the aid of hoes (Figure 15), and at least the final plowing is performed in fields well soaked by (401) rainwater backed up behind the dikes. Drawn harrows aid in the leveling and mixing of soil. Puddlers are lastly used to flatten and smooth surfaces about to receive rice seeds. Prior to broadcasting, the seeds are usually mixed in a cowdung wash and left sitting for several days in a small heap covered with leaves. Broadcast seeds stick in mud and there take root. Plants may remain untouched until harvesting, but most seeds take root in selected nursery fields from which plants are later pulled up and transplanted.

(221) Because seeds are planted on nursery fields from April into June, the transplanting period extends from June into August. It is during this period that most fields are plowed, harrowed, and puddled (Plate XII, E). In addition to supplemental dung fertilizer deposited on the fields, green leaves are trampled into the mud by the feet of (462) humans and livestock. Field preparation is men's work, but only women transplant young rice plants. The young plants, pulled up after approximately 40 days, are tied into bundles. By twisting off plant tops, each bundle top is flattened. Bundles carried to prepared fields are broken up individually as a field is planted. Two or three plants